

Paul's Letter to Titus



Events Leading to the Writing of Paul's Letter to Titus Written From Nicopolis During Paul's Release From First Imprisonment, c. A.D. 63

The Epistle of Paul to TITUS

INTRODUCTION

¹ **1. Title.** In the oldest Greek manuscript known today the title of this epistle is simply *Pros Titon* ("To Titus"). Doubtless, since Paul's original autograph was a personal letter, it contained no formal title.

2. Authorship. As with the other pastoral epistles, modern critical scholarship, generally, questions the claim of this epistle that Paul was its author (ch. 1:1), which claim this commentary accepts without question. For a consideration of the problems involved see Vol. V, pp. 183, 184. Concerning the time and circumstances of writing see Vol. VI, p. 107.

3. Historical Setting. This epistle was addressed to Titus at a time when he was engaged in ministry to the Christians of Crete. This large island in the Mediterranean is 160 mi. (258 km.) long and from 7 to 35 mi. (11 to 56 km.) wide. Its total area is 3,199 square mi. (8,285 km.). The narrow but fertile coastal plain on the northern side rises

¹Nichol, F. D. (1978). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible with exegetical and expository comment*. Commentary Reference Series (Tit 1:1). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

rapidly into a coastal range, beyond which a second range rises still higher, and behind that a third. The highest of these mountains is Mt. Psiloriti (elevation 8,065 ft. or 2,458 m.). This is the ancient Mt. Ida, where, according to an ancient Grecian legend, the pagan god Zeus was born.

In the 2d millennium B.C., Crete was the center of a civilization—the Minoan—that rivaled the civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt. There the semilegendary King Minos, it was said, kept in an intricate labyrinth a bull-monster that devoured captive Greek youths. This Minotaur myth may well be accounted for by the labyrinthine ruins of the Minoan palace at Cnossus and the pictures of young acrobats engaged in the perilous feat of leaping over the horns and backs of bulls. Before 1400 B.C. Minoan Crete had a powerful fleet, a far-flung commercial empire, and a highly sophisticated civilization (with an advanced art and three systems of writing) that spread into southern Greece, centered at Mycenae. Its trade with Egypt and Syria, evidenced by artifacts, made it a channel of communication between the East and Europe. The Philistines had lived on Crete before migrating to Palestine (see Vol. II, pp. 33, 34; Vol. III, p. 131).

Eventually it was colonized by the Greeks and played an important, though inconspicuous, role during some of the more glorious epochs of Hellenic history. In the earliest years of Christianity the Cretans were distinguished by a well-known reputation for dishonesty and untrustworthiness (cf. Titus 1:12). The island seems to have served as a headquarters for pirates in the 1st century B.C., but these were subdued, and in 67 B.C. it became part of the Roman Empire; however, Cretans continued to serve as mercenaries in foreign armies.

Not much is known of Titus. Personal references in the epistle are sketchy, and he is not mentioned in the Acts. The earliest allusion to him appears in Gal. 2:1–3, where Paul speaks of Titus accompanying him from Antioch when he attended the Jerusalem Council. There, as an uncircumcised convert from paganism, he became a test case as touching the question of the circumcision of Gentiles. After a time he represented Paul at Corinth (2 Cor. 8:16, 17; 12:17, 18), where he dealt successfully with the difficulties discussed so frankly in 2 Cor. 2; 7. He also organized collections for the saints at Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:6–10). Paul considered him a reliable confidant and a trustworthy soldier of the cross (2 Cor. 12:18), and refers to him as brother, fellow helper, and partner in labor (2 Cor. 2:13; 8:23). In this epistle he speaks of Titus as a son in the faith (ch. 1:4). Titus is last mentioned in the NT as having gone to Dalmatia, the modern Yugoslavia (2 Tim. 4:10). Eusebius, the church historian of the 4th century, refers to Titus as the bishop of the island of Crete (Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* iii. 4).

4. Theme. Aside from the fact that Paul had left Titus on the island of Crete (Titus 1:5), the exact circumstances under which this epistle was written cannot be reconstructed. Paul seems to have been traveling in company with Zenas, Apollos, Artemas, and Tychicus (ch. 3:12–15). Apparently Zenas and Apollos were about to set forth on a journey that would take them past Crete, and Paul therefore asked them to carry this epistle to Titus, who was to join Paul for the winter at Nicopolis. It is thought that the epistle to Titus was written between Paul's first and second imprisonments at Rome, about the year A.D. 65 (see Vol. VI, p. 107).

From the epistle it appears that there were groups of Christians in a number of places in Crete. The general church organization, however, was incomplete, and trouble was brewing because of false teachers, who may have been half-converted Jews. These false

teachers were laying great emphasis on myths, genealogies, and the law. They were wasting much time and energy, both their own and that of other church members, on pointless argument. Titus was responsible for straightening matters out, and Paul sends him counsel and encouragement. In this letter Paul is especially concerned with giving Titus counsel that would help him to establish the recently converted Christians of Crete in true Christian faith and living. Accordingly, the epistle is highly practical. Paul counsels a more thorough and formal church organization, and advises Titus as to qualifications for church elders. He reminds him of the Cretans' reputation for falsehood and laziness, and implies that the Christians there had been disturbed by Jewish legalists. Paul particularly points out that emphasis on ceremonial impurity in time tends to render the conscience itself impure. When the mind is absorbed with religious trivia, too often the really important questions of morality and integrity are ignored and religion deteriorates into a matter of form and theory.

Paul's great emphasis here is that the Cretan Christians should be sober, chaste, and thoroughly upright in all their living. Slaves—as doubtless many of them were—just like anyone else, should be obedient and honest.

At the climax of his letter Paul reminds Titus, and the Cretans through him, that God's kindness to man is not won by good deeds, but is the gift of His mercy through Jesus Christ.

An awareness of the pagan heritage of these Cretan brethren and of the mental confusion wrought by the Judaizing teachers helped Paul to deal specifically with their problems. His counsel is clear and specific. He understands his people and their basic human behavior patterns. In this letter he exhibits a precision and incisiveness that preachers today may well seek to emulate.

5. Outline.

- I. Salutation, 1:1–4.
- II. Instructions to Titus, 1:5 to 3:3.
 - A. The ordination of bishops, 1:5–12.
 - B. Curtailment of the activities of false teachers, 1:13–16.
 - C. Sound doctrine promotes excellency of character, 2:1–15.
 1. Character witness of older men, 2:2.
 2. Character witness of older women, 2:3.
 3. Character witness of younger women, 2:4, 5.
 4. Character witness of younger men, 2:6.
 5. Character witness of Titus, as a gospel minister, 2:7, 8.
 6. Character witness of Christian servants, 2:9, 10.
 7. The advent of Jesus Christ an incentive to excellency of character, 2:11–15.
- D. Civic responsibilities of the Christian, 3:1–3.
- III. Salvation the Product of Divine Love, 3:4–7.
 - A. Christians are justified by God's mercy, 3:4, 5.
 - B. Christians are sanctified by the power of the Holy Spirit, 3:5, 6.
 - C. Christians are heirs to eternal privileges, 3:7.
- IV. Superiority of Christian Character to Be Manifested, 3:8–11.
 - A. Christians are to lead out in good works, 3:8.
 - B. Christians are to avoid unprofitable activities, 3:9–11.
- V. Personal Remarks and Benediction, 3:12–15.

CHAPTER 1

1 *For what end Titus was left in Crete. 6 How they that are to be chosen ministers ought to be qualified. 11 The mouths of evil teachers to be stopped: 12 and what manner of men they be.*

1. Paul. See on Rom. 1:1.

Servant. Or, “bond servant.” Although the introductions to Paul’s epistles generally follow a similar pattern, the salutation here used is unique. Usually, Paul calls himself a “servant of Jesus Christ” (see on Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1).

Apostle. See on Rom. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:1. Although a slave of God, without property and independence, Paul was an ambassador for the King of kings, with all the prestige and privileges accompanying this assignment.

Jesus Christ. For the significance of the names Jesus and Christ see on Matt. 1:1. For Paul, Jesus Christ is God and possesses the attributes of God (see on Col. 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2 Tim. 4:1). The authority of Jesus Christ, who personally commissioned Paul to the apostolate (see on Col. 1:11, 12), is the supreme authority of the eternal God. Paul’s embassy is from the Most High; his credentials were presented to him on the Damascus road (Acts 9:15; 22:14, 15; 26:16, 17; Col. 1:1).

The length of this greeting is unusual but purposeful. Because Titus is working in a new and difficult field his authority may frequently be challenged. To avoid any embarrassing misunderstanding Paul makes a clear statement regarding his own divine credentials and the validity of Titus’ commission, thus banishing with quiet finality any possible doubt regarding Titus’ authority.

Crete was a new and difficult field. Paul had apparently labored there for a short time only, and his early departure may, perhaps, have been made the occasion of some misunderstanding. Consequently, much depended upon a proper understanding of the position and authority of Titus and of Paul, under whose direction Titus worked. Paul’s introduction makes his own position clear. If anyone rejects Titus and his counsel he also, in so doing, rejects the clearly defined position and authority of Paul. The respect the Cretans had for Paul is also to be accorded to Paul’s personal representative.

According to the faith. Some difference of opinion exists as to whether this phrase states the aim of Paul’s apostleship or the standard by which he was chosen. If the latter, it may mean either that Paul had been chosen in conformity with the faith, that is, with the Christian revelation of truth, or that his preaching was in accordance with this revelation of truth or with Christian doctrine.

If it expresses the aim of Paul’s labors, it means that he considers himself an instrument in the plan of God to bring about faith in the hearts of men and women. The thought might thus be, The object of my apostleship is to bring the chosen of God to saving faith.

The purpose of Paul’s introduction is to win, both for himself and for Titus, the full approval and confidence of the Cretan Christians. Accordingly, perhaps Paul here emphasizes that the contents of this letter and the whole ministry of Titus are in complete accord with the Christian faith as the Cretans have already understood it. The mission of Titus, as Paul’s representative, is in complete accord with the will of Christ and with the revelation of truth they already possess.

Elect. Gr. *eklektoi*, “chosen [ones]” (see on Rom. 8:33). Paul may here compare the Christian church with ancient Israel, which had been chosen by God to bear the message

of salvation to the world (see Isa. 43:20; 45:4; 65:9). For a discussion of Israel's role as the "elect" people of God see Vol. IV, pp. 25–38. The responsibilities once assigned to Israel now belonged to the Christian church (see on 1 Peter 2:9, 10).

Acknowledging. Gr. *epignōsis* (see on Eph. 1:17). Paul refers not only to an intellectual understanding but to an experimental knowledge of gospel truth. Upon this knowledge faith is built and strengthened. Compare 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:25; 3:7; Heb. 10:26.

Godliness. The Christian "faith," or teaching, is designed to produce godly lives, not merely new theories (see on 1 Tim. 2:2; 4:7, 8; 6:3, 5, 6; 2 Tim. 3:5; 2 Peter 1:3).

2. Eternal life. Gr. *zōē aiōnios* (see on John 3:16). For *zōē*, "life," see on John 1:4, and for *aiōnios*, "eternal," or Matt. 25:41. Eternal life is the goal of Paul's ministry and the objective of the true Christian, who builds his life on the principles of "the truth" (Titus 1:1).

Cannot lie. See on 2 Cor. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:13. The Christian revelation is as reliable as the unchangeable nature of God.

Before the world began. See on Rom. 16:25; 2 Tim. 1:9.

3. In due times. Or "at the proper time," "at the right time" (cf. 1 Tim. 6:15). Even though God's promises have always existed, the Cretans were but recently made aware of them, in accord with God's design for the proclamation of His message.

Word. That is, God's message of salvation.

Preaching. Gr. *kērugma*, "proclamation by a herald" (see on 1 Cor. 1:21).

Committed. Or, "entrusted" (see on 1 Tim. 1:11). Paul does not hesitate to refer to his preaching as the vehicle by which the Word of God is to be publicly manifested. With conviction the apostle proclaims the gospel as the revelation of God's deepest purposes. An awesome responsibility rests upon a man whom God commissions as His spokesman, for he becomes a living link between the sufficiency of God and the need of men. As God's ambassador, or "apostle" (Titus 1:1), he voices not his own message but that of the One whom he represents. Thus the true minister, like Paul, preaches the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

Commandment. See on Rom. 16:26; 1 Tim. 1:1. Paul's assignment to preach was not the result of any plan of his own making but of the will and purpose of God, who had laid upon Him this responsibility in so overwhelming a manner that he was constrained to say, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16).

God our Saviour. See on 1 Tim. 1:1.

4. Titus. Titus is not mentioned in the book of Acts. A few facts concerning him may be gathered from incidental references in the Pauline epistles. He was a Gentile Christian (Gal. 2:3), possibly a convert of Paul (Titus 1:4). He is first mentioned as accompanying Paul from Antioch to Jerusalem for the Jerusalem Council (Gal. 2:1–3; cf. Acts 14:26–28; 15:1–4); hence it is sometimes conjectured that he was a native of Antioch. Later he is associated with Paul during part of the apostle's Third Missionary Journey (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6, 13). The epistle to Titus informs us that he was left in Crete to set certain things in order and to organize churches there (ch. 1:5). The Cretan service was only temporary, for Titus was requested to join Paul at Nicopolis (ch. 3:12). Titus is last mentioned in 2 Tim. 4:10, where he is said to have gone to Dalmatia.

Own son. For similar words addressed to Timothy see 1 Tim. 1:2. The legitimacy of Titus' position as a church leader is based on the spiritual direction and nurture Titus had received from Paul himself. Titus is fully authorized to perform his duties as leader of the church in Crete.

Common faith. That is, common both to Gentiles like Titus and to Hebrews like Paul. Christianity unifies men irrespective of race, color, social position, or sex. All are made one in Jesus Christ (see Gal. 3:28). Compare 1 Tim. 1:2.

Grace. See on Rom. 1:7.

Mercy. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of this word.

Peace. See on Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3.

God the Father. See on Rom. 1:7.

Saviour. See chs. 1:3; 2:10–14; 3:4–7. Paul's emphasis on the role of Jesus Christ as man's Saviour anticipates the main theme of the epistle—that Christians are to reveal the saving power of God.

5. For this cause. Paul here restates his original instruction to Titus, doubtless for the benefit of the Cretan church members. Information regarding Paul's early departure from Crete is lacking. Perhaps the pressure of duties in other areas hurried him away. Or, he may simply have been confident of Titus' ability to carry the work forward. Titus had demonstrated his resourcefulness and administrative abilities on earlier assignments (see 2 Cor. 2:12, 13; 7:5, 6; 8:16, 17, 23).

Because no mention of Paul's visit to Crete is recorded in the book of Acts, some have suggested that this trip occurred after his first imprisonment in Rome (see Vol. VI, p. 107).

Crete. See p. 355.

Set in order. Titus was to complete the work of organizing the Cretan church. Perhaps because the Cretans may have thought no additional organization necessary after Paul's departure, Titus stood in need of this special authorization in order to perfect an efficient organization. Every new organization requires time and attention if it is to operate efficiently, and every leader knows that new plans must be unfolded gradually and tactfully.

Wanting. Or, "lacking," that is, the things that remain to be done.

Ordain. Or, "appoint."

Elders. Gr. *presbuteroi* (see Vol. VI, pp. 26, 38; see on Acts 11:30). The appointing of the "elders" included the ceremony of ordination (see 1 Tim. 4:14; 5:22; 2 Tim. 1:6).

In every city. Or, "city by city." Apparently the gospel had made extensive progress in Crete.

Appointed. Gr. *diatassō*, "to direct," "to command." Here Paul refers to previous instruction given to Titus concerning the administration of the church in Crete.

6. If any. Paul here begins to enumerate the qualifications of the *presbuteroi*, or "elders." This parallels his instruction to Timothy (see on 1 Tim. 3:1–7).

Blameless. See on 1 Tim. 3:10.

Husband of one wife. See on 1 Tim. 3:2.

Faithful children. That is, children who are Christian believers and who, in their behavior, demonstrate their loyalty to Christian principles. Children who are not loyal to Christian principles are almost too great a handicap for any church leader. The failure of

the minister, or local church elder, properly to control his own household will mislead many, both within and without the church. A man who has failed to train his own children properly, so that they lack restraint and self-discipline, reveals a lack of ability to govern others. Accordingly, he is unfitted to assume responsibility as a leader of the church. Compare the tragic history of Eli and his two sons (see on 1 Sam. 2:27; 3:11). “We cannot think that any man, however great his ability and usefulness, is best serving God or the world while his time is given to other pursuits, to the neglect of his own children” (CG 232).

Riot. Gr. *asōtia*, “dissipation,” “incorrigibility.” Compare Eph. 5:18.

Unruly. Gr. *anupotaktos*, “rebellious,” “undisciplined.” Compare 1 Tim. 1:9.

7. Bishop. Gr. *episkopos*, “overseer” (see Acts 11:30; 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:1).

Blameless. See on 1 Tim. 3:10.

Steward. See on 1 Cor. 4:1.

Selfwilled. Or, “arrogant.”

Not soon angry. Or, “not quick-tempered.” In any organization, secular or ecclesiastical, there are moments when ideas clash and misunderstandings develop. The efficiency of a church under the strain of divergent opinions depends upon the stabilizing influence of a self-possessed leader, whose self-discipline inspires patience and a spirit of understanding.

Not given to wine. See on 1 Tim. 3:3.

No striker. See on 1 Tim. 3:3.

Given to filthy lucre. See on 1 Tim. 3:8.

8. Hospitality. See on 1 Tim. 3:2.

Good men. Rather, “goodness.”

Sober. Or, “sound-minded” (see on 1 Tim. 3:2).

Just. Gr. *dikaios*, “upright” (see on Matt. 1:19).

Holy. Gr. *hosios*, “pure,” “pious” (see on Acts 2:27).

Temperate. Rather, “self-controlled,” an appropriate capstone to the positive qualities to be exercised. Because a good quality may be impaired by excess, self-control in all things is a requisite to successful church leadership.

9. Holding fast. Or, “clinging to.”

Faithful. Or, “trustworthy,” “sure.”

Word. That is, the gospel.

Able. In addition to an unimpeachable moral record, the high calling of the ministry demands intellectual ability of the highest order. The prospective minister must manifest both the ability to understand and the ability to communicate truth, prior to his ordination. A thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, preferably in their original languages, should be the minister’s first goal. Otherwise, he may ignorantly wrest them from their true meaning (see GW 105). God never sends the Holy Spirit to bless ignorance (GW 105, 106). Mental discipline will greatly enlarge any Christian worker’s efficiency. The ministry demands more of those who give themselves to it than would other professions, and the need to continue learning never ceases. Indeed, the ministry is more than a profession, it is a calling—a divine calling. The advancement of the cause of God is too

often hindered by men who attempt to witness for Him with shoddy scholarship and undisciplined mental habits.

The operation of the Holy Spirit upon native ability induces a minister to seek self-improvement in every possible way. With a humility born of an honest view of himself the genuine minister realizes his own shortcomings and the immense task before him. Such a man is not overwhelmed, but challenged, by the possibilities confronting him, and he seeks, prayerfully and diligently, to improve the talents lent to him by God. Even amid the pressure of his many duties he will maintain a sense of relative values. He will not allow himself to use these pressing duties as an excuse for neglecting the cultivation of his own mental and spiritual faculties. "Every one should feel that there rests upon him an obligation to reach the height of intellectual greatness" (GW 279). Only an educated minister, truly dedicated to his Lord, can fully honor and glorify Him. Compare 1 Tim. 3:2; 4:16.

Sound Doctrine. Or, "healthy doctrine" (see on 1 Tim. 1:10). Only a minister skilled in God's Word can speak with the authority of "healthy" doctrine. He uses passages of Scripture within the context of their original meaning, as the Bible writers, guided by the Holy Spirit, intended them.

Convince. Gr. *elegchō*, "to convict," with adequate proof (see on John 8:46; 1 Tim. 5:20). Only arguments that are soundly constructed and able to pass the closest scrutiny of the keenest minds will adequately "convince" and silence those who oppose "sound doctrine."

Gainsayers. That is, those who speak against, contradicters.

10. For. Paul now explains his reason for emphasizing the high moral and intellectual standards that should govern the selection of church leaders. The Cretan church apparently had an above average number of false teachers who accentuated some of the basic weaknesses of the Cretan inhabitants (see on v. 12).

Unruly. See on v. 6. Nominal church members who refused cooperation were factious, opinionated, and insubordinate.

Vain talkers. Compare 1 Tim. 1:6.

Deceivers. Compare 2 Peter 2:3, 18, 19.

Of the circumcision. That is, of Jewish extraction, perhaps akin to the perverted "teachers of the law" (see on 1 Tim. 1:7), who maintained the necessity of circumcision and other rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law (see Vol. VI, p. 932).

11. Must be stopped. No public opportunity should be given to the "vain talkers and deceivers" (v. 10). The alert elder is duty bound to protect his congregation from confusion. Compare 1 Tim. 1:4.

Subvert. See on 2 Tim. 2:18.

Whole houses. Compare 2 Tim. 3:6.

Filthy lucre's sake. Compare 1 Tim. 3:8. The strict qualification here set forth requiring elders and deacons (see on 1 Tim. 3:8; Titus 1:7) to be financially irreproachable is best understood in the context of Paul's day. Apparently, many would-be religious workers used their church office for private gain, by adapting their teachings to please the wealthy or by using their sacred office to secure personal favors.

12. Prophet of their own. That is, a Cretan prophet, probably Epimenides, who lived at Knossos in the 6th century B.C. For Paul's use of this same poem on Mars' Hill see on Acts 17:28.

Liars. This part of Epimenides' poem was also quoted by Callimachus (3d century B.C.) in his hymn to Zeus. Instead of asserting his own opinion, Paul wisely quotes, not from the enemies of the Cretans, but from one of their own respected spokesmen. In the ancient world the phrase, "to Cretanize," meant to lie, or deceive, like a Cretan. This offensive Cretan trait was now apparent in the perverse religious teachers and the "unruly" members of various congregations (v. 10).

Evil beasts. The poet here notes the undisciplined arrogance of his fellow countrymen, the same lack of moral responsibility now observed by Paul.

Slow bellies. Or, "lazy gluttons." The Cretans were more disposed to pamper themselves than to work earnestly for the improvement of their own status and for the common good (cf. Phil. 3:19).

13. This witness is true. Paul here endorses the severe judgment the Cretan poet had passed on Cretan character. What had been written of the Cretans 600 years before was still true—their basic character had not changed. This lack of moral integrity that permeated much of the Cretan population posed a grave danger to the young churches on the island.

Rebuke. Gr. *elegchō* (see on v. 9).

Sharply. As the surgeon's knife cuts away diseased tissue in order that sound health may result, so the words and discipline of Titus and the Cretan elders are to cut away that which endangers the future of the church.

Sound. Or, "healthy" (see 1 Tim. 6:3; 2 Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9; see on 1 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 1:13).

14. Jewish fables. See on 1 Tim. 1:4. Similar problems confronted both Titus and Timothy (see on 1 Tim. 1:4–7). The Jewish practice of interpreting the OT by the allegorical method obscured the truth and produced speculation and strife (see on 1 Tim. 1:4; 6:4, 5). Such a method gratified the mind, but left the soul barren. Jewish fables gave rise to word battles (2 Tim. 2:14) and lacked the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.

Commandments of men. See Matt. 15:9. The Christian church has always faced the problem of perverted teachings that pose as "the truth." Each teaching of the church should be able to stand the closest scrutiny. Satan can always do more damage to the advancement of truth by working within the church than by attacking it from without.

15. The pure. That is, the pure in heart (see on Matt. 5:8), those who understand righteousness by faith and who are aware of the dangers of the Jewish system of ritual and ceremony and Jewish fables (Titus 1:14).

All things. See on 1 Cor. 6:12. Paul here deals with Jewish ritual purity. He distinguishes between those who attempt to compensate for a lack of moral purity by ceremonial purifications, and those who believe that ceremonial performances are not essential to the development of a God-approved life. Paul does not here imply that the Christian is free to engage in practices condemned elsewhere in Scripture, or that Biblical prohibitions regarding moral conduct or dietary practices do not apply to Christians. Compare Christ's teaching in Mark 7:19 (see comment there and on Rom. 14:20).

Them that are defiled. That is, those who have not been converted and who do not know the peace that accompanies righteousness by faith. They are the "unbelieving," who refuse to comply with Paul's gospel, the "gainsayers" (v. 9).

Their mind. That is, their way of thinking, their attitude. Compare Rom. 7:23; Eph. 4:23; Phil. 4:7; 2 Tim. 3:8. The "defiled and unbelieving" allow their minds to be

governed by unsanctified desires. For a discussion of the effect of conversion upon the mind see on Rom. 12:2; cf. on Phil. 4:8.

Conscience. The consciousness of moral right and wrong is dulled when the mind elects to dwell on unsanctified desires. Under such circumstances the conscience cannot function effectively. Like a magnetized compass it ceases to be an accurate and reliable guide.

16. They profess. Either Judaizing Christians or orthodox Jews, or both. Because of their emphasis upon intellectual speculations these unconverted teachers claim to know God, perhaps even better than the Christians. However, their behavior reveals their true master; they do not the works of God.

In works they deny. See on Matt. 7:21–27.

Being abominable. The insincere profession of these perverted religious teachers and “unruly” (v. 10) church members constitutes a great offense in the eyes of God. It would be better for such people if they had never heard of Christianity (see on Luke 12:47).

Reprobate. Gr. *adokimos*, “not standing the test,” “worthless” (see on 2 Tim. 3:8). As a result of their hypocritical, defiled, selfish lives, these men were useless for any good or noble work. Apparently many of the Cretan believers went to teachers of this kind for instruction in Christian doctrine and practice. Paul had no choice but to speak frankly concerning both the teachers and their followers.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

5–75T 617

6–91T 692

7–9AA 95

8 AH 445; ML 194; 2T 645; 6T 342; WM 85, 97

9 1T 415; 8T 18

10–13COL 248

13 3T 359

16 TM 451; 1T 406, 415; 2T 125, 444, 682; 5T 84, 145

CHAPTER 2

1 *Directions given unto Titus both for his doctrine and life. 9 Of the duty of servants, and in general of all Christians.*

1. Speak thou. The Greek stresses the contrast between the content and manner of Titus’ teaching and that of the false teachers in Crete (see on ch. 1:10–16). Paul here outlines the third task confronting Titus. He was (1) to organize and acquaint the Cretan brethren with church government (ch. 1:5–8); (2) to refute the “vain talkers and deceivers” (v. 10), who were teaching unsound doctrine, and blighting the moral tone of the whole church by their ungodly lives (vs. 9–16); (3) to communicate clearly and accurately the truth of the gospel.

Sound doctrine. See on ch. 1:9.

2. Aged men. Gr. *presbutai*, “older men.” Compare 1 Tim. 5:1. See on Acts 11:30.

Sober. Gr. *nephalioi*, “abstainers from wine” (see on 1 Tim. 3:2, 3).

Grave. Gr. *semnoi*, “worthy of honor,” “dignified” (see 1 Tim. 3:8).

Temperate. Gr. *sōphrōn*, “prudent,” “sound-minded” (see on 1 Tim. 3:2). Older men in the church ought to be respected for their wise counsel. When one is disciplined by God, such counsel should not be taken lightly.

Sound in faith. See on ch. 1:13.

Charity. Or, “love” (see on 1 Cor. 13:1).

Patience. Gr. *hupomonē*, “fortitude,” “endurance” (see on Rom. 5:3). These qualities must ever be kept healthy. As the years go by, men may become weary and their faith may become adulterated by superstition and tradition, their love weakened into mere sentiment; their patience, into apathetic acquiescence. Paul’s own life was a glorious illustration of the ideal here set forth, a pattern of splendor for all men and women.

3. Aged women. Compare 1 Tim. 5:2. Christianity elevated the status of womanhood to a position hitherto unknown. However, this new status required a corresponding response from Christian women. They were to fulfill God’s original purpose as bulwarks of tenderness and devotion. Thus, Christian women were to set the pattern of purity and devotion to home and children, both for their own daughters as well as for their pagan neighbors (see Titus 2:4).

As becometh holiness. Or, “as those engaged in sacred service,” literally, “as priestesses.”

Not false accusers. See on 2 Tim. 3:3.

Not given to. Or, “no longer remain enslaved to.”

Much wine. See on 1 Tim. 3:8. Because the church at Crete was newly established the “aged women” were those who had lived most of their lives by the standards and habits of a pagan society. The drinking of wine is a common practice in the Middle East and the Orient. After a long life of such practice, enslavement to wine would be the rule, not the exception.

Teachers of good things. In contrast with mere gossip, slander, or “old wives’ fables” (1 Tim. 4:7).

4. The young women. The virtues of womanhood are best transmitted from one generation to another by emotionally mature women who have learned well the lessons of self-discipline and personal piety. It is tragic for young women to assume the duties of wifehood and motherhood without having been properly taught by precept and example the responsibilities of Christian womanhood.

To be sober. Gr. *sōphronizō*, “to make sound-minded,” that is, to train for emotional maturity (see on v. 5).

Husbands. The sound-minded wife realizes that the harmony and strength of the home depends upon her role as a helper to her husband, not as a competitor.

Children. Paul emphasizes the basic law of family security and emotional development. The contribution of a loving mother, consistently and unselfishly offered to every growing child, cannot be fully supplied otherwise. Children are to be considered neither as barriers to adult happiness nor as organisms that automatically develop noble and respected virtues.

5. Discreet. Gr. *sōphrōn*, “prudent,” “self-controlled,” “sound-minded.” Paul’s frequent emphasis on *sōphrōn* and its derivatives in his letters to both Timothy and Titus (1 Tim. 2:9, 15; 3:2; 2 Tim. 1:7; Titus 1:8; 2:2, 4–6, 12) reflects a studied endeavor to

solve a major problem in church organization and character development. Self-control denotes victory over selfishness. Personal desires are to be made subordinate to the overall good of the family and others, and disappointments are to be met with courage and buoyancy.

Keepers at home. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading “workers at home.” Mothers who spend a great portion of time outside of the home sometimes neglect family responsibilities. To allow the children to roam without parental oversight, or to place them under the guidance of a paid assistant, does not fulfill the divine instruction here given.

Good. Paul’s description of a Christian woman compares with the classic portraiture of the honorable mother and wife in Prov. 31:10–31.

Obedient. See on Eph. 5:22; 1 Tim. 2:11.

Blasphemed. Because Christians bear the name of their God and profess to represent Him, Paul urged a careful review of the daily habits by which the power of religion is judged. Like pagans, many church members choose to observe elaborate ritual instead of faithfully living for God day by day. The faithful performance of daily tasks constitutes the first responsibility of a Christian woman. No church duties, however well performed, can compensate for a lack of proper child care or emotional immaturity. If the pagan notes that Christian women are not more self-controlled and responsible than pagan women, the cause of Christianity suffers great loss. Because of Christianity’s loftier view of woman’s role in the home and the church the pagan world will scrutinize carefully the results of such a profession. Paul’s special care was to establish the church on right principles, knowing that the moral and spiritual tone of the home and community is largely determined by its women.

6. Young men. That is, in contrast with the “aged men” (v. 2).

Sober minded. See on vs. 4, 5. Perhaps Titus, being a young man, would be most successful in counseling those of his own age.

7. In all things. Compare similar counsel to Timothy (see on 1 Tim. 4:12). Genuine Christianity includes every activity in which a man can engage with his thoughts captive to the will of God (2 Cor. 10:5).

Shewing. Both the Christians of Crete and their pagan neighbors had the right to expect that the Christian pastor would faithfully exemplify the principles of Christianity.

In all probability Titus had been reared in a pagan home, possibly in the luxurious and wicked city of Antioch. He had been drawn to the Master’s service in the freshness of his youth. He had been tested in the furnace of trial and difficulty. Here Paul reminds Titus that for him to set an example by his own self-restrained and disciplined Christian manhood would provide the most effective inspiration possible for the Cretan believers.

Doctrine. Or, “teaching.” Compare 2 Tim. 3:10.

Uncorruptness. Or, “soundness.” Compare v. 1.

Gravity. Gr. *semnotēs*, “dignified behavior” (see on 1 Tim. 2:2).

Sincerity. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of this word.

8. Sound. Or, “healthy,” a frequent emphasis in this epistle (chs. 1:9, 13; 2:1, 2, 8). Because of sin human nature is diseased, but the gospel is Heaven’s prescription for removing the cause of the infirmity and for restoring men and women to sound health—mentally, physically, spiritually. False teachings, like the nostrums of medical quacks, do not cure the disease, and often complicate it. Paul thus reminds Titus that his opponents

will closely observe both his life and his words in order to find something against him. If Titus, however, takes care to speak precisely, carefully, and prayerfully, his opponents will be put to shame. They will be left without a basis for the criticisms they hope to make.

Contrary part. Neither the “vain talkers and deceivers” (ch. 1:10), who were within the church, nor the pagans without were to have a basis for criticism.

9. Servants. Or, “slaves” (see on John 8:34).

Please them well. The conversion of slaves to Christianity was not to make them less satisfactory workers, but to change sullen disobedience into cheerful helpfulness. For a discussion of Paul’s counsel concerning Christian slaves see on Eph. 6:5–9; Col. 3:22 to 4:1; 1 Tim. 6:1, 2.

10. Purloining. Or, “misappropriating,” “embezzling.” Slaves were often employed in duties besides those connected with the house or farm. Some were entrusted with business ventures and permitted much personal freedom. This gave them opportunity for dishonesty. At times they received an elaborate education as artists or physicians, in which capacity they worked for their masters. Thus, in the days of Paul a slave had many opportunities to cheat his owner. Thieving or embezzling of the master’s property was so common in Crete that frequently servants were called thieves. Christian slaves were to be manifestly superior in loyalty and honesty.

Good fidelity. Christian slaves were to be completely trustworthy as they served their earthly masters.

Adorn. See on 1 Tim. 2:9. Paul asserts that the Christlike life alone can rightly commend the gospel to the world. New men, not new methods, constitute God’s plan for the advancement of the gospel (see on 1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Peter 3:12).

Doctrine of God. Probably, “doctrine about God,” the source of every Christian hope, which Paul develops in vs. 11–15.

11. Grace. Gr. *charis* (see on John 1:14; Rom. 1:7; 3:24; 1 Cor. 1:3). Only by the grace of God can aged men (Titus 2:2), aged women (v. 3), young women (vs. 4, 5), young men (v. 6), Titus (vs. 7, 8), and slaves (vs. 9, 10) each fulfill the responsibilities of his particular status in life. The triumphant note in Paul’s gospel is that men and women do find victory over sin, that the Christlike life, once revealed in flesh and blood, may be duplicated in every Spirit-motivated man or woman. Every command from God is accompanied by His “grace”—the power to fulfill His purposes (see on 2 Cor. 12:9; Heb. 13:9).

Appeared. “Grace,” that is, the abundant saving love of God manifested to sinners, has always been available to men (see on Ps. 51:1–17; see Additional Note on Psalm 36). But God’s plan for saving men was made clearer at the coming of Jesus.

All men. Compare John 1:9; 3:17; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9. All men are given sufficient opportunity to be saved, but the stubborn refusal of many to accept the “grace of God” results in eternal death; thus, God’s purpose is, to that extent, thwarted and the gift of salvation neglected. That Christians should rightly represent the principles of the Christlike life in order that pagans may be impressed with the superiority of Christianity is the theme of Paul’s counsel in this chapter.

12. Teaching. Gr. *paideuō*, “to educate,” “to give guidance to,” frequently used to describe the process of bringing up a child. Saving grace not only helps men to eradicate

sinful practices; it actively cultivates new and worthy habits. This daily instruction from God may be described as the process of sanctification (see on Rom. 6:19; 1 Thess. 4:3).

Denying. Or, “renouncing.”

Lusts. Or, “desires,” which aspire to nothing higher than the pleasures of this world. Compare 1 John 2:15, 16.

Soberly. Gr. *sōphronōs*, “sound-mindedly” (see on v. 5). The genuine Christian recognizes his social responsibilities as well as his spiritual duties as a child of God. The “grace of God” imparts sufficient power so that men may display true self-control (see on Eph. 4:13).

Righteously. Or, “justly.”

Godly. Gr. *eusebōs* (see on 2 Tim. 3:12).

Present world. See on 1 Tim. 6:17.

13. Looking for. Gr. *prosdechomai*, “to wait for,” “to expect.” Paul adds a second incentive as he appeals to the Cretan church members to live as representatives of Jesus Christ. In addition to living superior lives on earth the Christian is rewarded with the immeasurable gift of eternal life. Consequently, the daily life must be in harmony with the Christian’s professed eagerness for the quick return of Jesus. As Simeon was rewarded for his faithful “waiting” (*prosdechomai*), when he beheld Jesus (see on Luke 2:25), so a great company of Christians will one day find their greatest joy as they witness the glory of Christ’s second coming.

Blessed hope. The hope of Christ’s return has been the grand incentive of the Christian faith for nearly 2,000 years, buoying the believer’s spirit and steeling his courage amid all the vicissitudes of life. The dark moments of discouragement, disillusionment, or sorrow in this life’s experience are gloriously compensated for by the Christian’s hope in the second advent.

Glorious appearing. Or, “appearing of the glory.” For *epiphaneia*, “visible appearance,” see on 1 Tim. 6:14. The phrase “blessed hope” is in apposition with “glorious appearing,” or “appearing of the glory,” that is, the appearing constitutes the blessed hope. The translation “appearance of the glory” suggests the unveiling of Christ’s divine attributes as He returns to this earth as King of kings, surrounded by the glorious splendor of myriads of heavenly angels.

God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Compare 2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8. The Greek of this expression is ambiguous, hence uncertainty exists as to whether Paul is speaking of both the Father and the Son or of Christ only. Many commentators prefer to regard the expression as referring to Christ only. No difficulty is encountered when it is so interpreted, for Paul ascribes the prerogatives of the Godhead to Jesus (see on Rom. 1:7; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:1). For a discussion of the deity of Christ see Vol. V, p. 917. Compare 2 Peter 1:1 for a similar Greek construction. Paul’s context is the “appearing” of Christ in the second advent, as Jesus Himself promised (see on John 14:1–3). Because of the two tremendous facts here revealed, that Jesus Christ is God in the fullest sense, and that His return to this world constitutes the grand climax of history, this verse has been an exceptional source of comfort to Christians in every age.

14. Gave himself. Paul here describes the work of the Son of God as He fulfills the office of “Saviour” (v. 13). Christ’s role as Saviour and Mediator for lost man was not

thrust upon Him by the arbitrary will of the Father; Christ “gave himself” as a voluntary sacrifice for His wayward creation (see on John 10:17, 18; Acts 3:15). In the person of Jesus Christ, God revealed the love of the divine Father. Though His sons and daughters suffer the consequences of moral and physical transgression, God has manifested His love by sharing with man the pain caused by sin. Christ’s gift cancels all doubts regarding the supreme splendor of God’s love to those who have disobeyed Him. From the inception of sin God has experienced the pain of unrequited love. Christ’s life on earth is cause enough for the praise of the redeemed throughout eternity. Angels stand silent in wonder that man’s only obligation consists in accepting this matchless love of the Saviour and in returning to the family of God.

Redeem. Gr. *lutroō*, “to set free,” “to rescue.” For the related noun *lutron* see on Matt. 20:28. Compare Ps. 130:8. God’s plan is to restore in lost men the original image in which they were created. Sin will not be overlooked, but eradicated. The process of sanctification consists of the grace of God acting upon the fully dedicated will of man, so that every trace of sin may be completely removed from the life (see on Rom. 3:24; 5:1; 6:19). To deliver man from the alluring power of sin and to lead him into habits of righteousness demands nothing less than the power of God. Because of sinful habits etched deeply within his life man has no other resort than to grasp the rescuing hand of God for complete deliverance. Yet, though the whirling worlds respond instantly to the directions of God, man, the climax of all creation, often limits the power and designs of God by his rebellious will.

Iniquity. Gr. *anomia*, “lawlessness.”

Purify. See on 1 John 1:7, 9; 3:3. No mere Jewish ritual or ceremony will suffice here (cf. Acts 15:9). The result of man’s rescue from sin by the grace of God is a life cleansed of every evil thought and deed.

Peculiar. Gr. *periousios*, “chosen,” that is, by God for Himself. In Old English the word “peculiar” designated what had become a personal possession.

The Christian church is the successor to Israel as God’s special agent for the communication of the gospel (see on 1 Peter 2:9). The same mission, privileges, and responsibilities that literal Israel had were transferred to spiritual Israel (see Vol. IV, pp. 35, 36).

Zealous. The Christian church, while awaiting the second advent, will also fulfill the mission once assigned to the Jewish nation of revealing, in word and deed, the principles of God’s government.

15. Speak. Paul here gives three methods of teaching and leading Christian congregations. Some church members are eager to listen; others need additional urging and more direct counsel; still others, for various reasons, need stronger admonition coupled with incontrovertible evidence.

Authority. The minister’s authority ultimately rests, not in his office, but in his divine commission and in the integrity of his ministry.

Despise. Titus should present his teachings so cogently that his hearers will not honestly avoid what he is saying or find his arguments illogical, and thus lose confidence in him.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

5 2T 315
 6 CT 535; FE 192
 6–8AA 369; CSW 119; GW 60; MYP 368; TM 148; 1T 415, 499
 7 1T 446
 8 COL 338; 2T 709
 10 CS 27; 1T 507; 3T 422; 5T 439; 8T 195
 11 GC 261; MB 7
 11, 12 4T 332
 11–14AA 205; CT 330; 3T 52
 11–15TM 148
 12 AA 505; 1T 285
 12–141T 507
 13 Ev 220; 2T 194
 13, 14 1T 274, 487
 13–151T 283, 287
 14 AA 519; CW 102; FE 483; ML 218; MYP 400; Te 199; TM 441; 1T 136, 150, 305; 2T 105, 150, 317; 3T 538; 4T 17, 332; 5T 148, 592, 730; 6T 372; 8T 248
 15 1T 276; 3T 359

CHAPTER 3

1 *Titus is yet further directed by Paul, both concerning the things he should teach, and not teach. 10 He is willed also to reject obstinate heresticks: 12 which done, he appointeth him both time and place, wherein he should come unto him, and so concludeth.*

1. Put them in mind. Every new generation, and each new member received into the Christian church, needs, often, to hear of the civic responsibilities that rest upon the Christian. Because the merit of the gospel is measured by the worth of its adherents, the Christian church must stand before the world as a body of superior men and women, neglecting no opportunity to relieve community need and cooperating in every way to support the forces of law and order. Hitherto, the apostle's counsel has consisted of counsel with respect to relationships and duties within the church family. He now turns to the pagan world, outside the church community.

Subject. Probably this counsel was specially needed in Crete. Crete had been under Roman rule for over a century, and its people fretted under foreign domination, as did the Jews. Paul's counsel on loyalty to the government was most appropriate. For a discussion of the relationship that should exist between Christians and pagan governments see on Rom. 13:1–7.

Principalities and powers. Or, "rulers and authorities." These would include all levels of civil administration, from the local officials to the emperor at Rome.

Obey. Christians are to be known for their loyalty to the civil authorities in matters such as tax collections and community projects. Neglect of civic responsibilities brings needless reproach upon the church. Peace and order are an integral part of the Christian message. Disloyalty and sedition would not commend Christianity to the pagan world.

Paul's counsel testifies to his own nobility of character. His experience with the Roman government had not been pleasant. Paul had been imprisoned, fettered, hindered, beaten, and threatened because Roman officials had listened to the malicious stories invented by his implacable Jewish enemies.

Good work. A genuine Christian should be recognized as an upright, patriotic citizen, who eagerly supports every governmental program designed to relieve hardship and to establish equity. At the same time the Christian is conscience bound to refrain from any governmental activity that denies basic rights to any man or that encourages evil practices.

2. Speak evil. Or, “blaspheme.” As bad as some of his fellow citizens may be, or as diabolical as some of the magistrates may appear to be, the Christian must never display temper or use abusive or uncouth language.

No brawlers. Literally, “nonfighters.” Genuine Christians do not stir up quarrels (see on Heb. 12:14).

Gentle. Gr. *epieikēs* (see on James 3:17).

Meekness. Gr. *praotēs*, “humility,” “considerateness” (see on Matt. 5:5). This is the inner compelling spirit that moves Christians to be “gentle.” Because Crete was the crossroads and market place of the Mediterranean, it was often the scene of angry misunderstandings between traders and visitors from many countries. Yet Paul here urges the highest possible standard of conduct in one of the world’s most difficult environments. Because of the darker background, true Christian witnessing will shine even more gloriously.

All men. Christian love and respect extend to both coarse and cultured, to both sensual and self-controlled. Such love Christ alone fully represents.

3. Sometimes. Or, “formerly,” “once.” Because these church members, before conversion, were also pagans, they should now be tolerant of the pagans’ mistakes. Furthermore, as Christians, now empowered by the “grace of God” (ch. 2:11), they were not to return to their former moral level, as exhibited by pagan neighbors, for then they would be denying the power of God.

Foolish. Or, “unintelligent,” suggesting a lack of understanding as to what was morally and spiritually correct (cf. Rom. 1:21; Eph. 4:18).

Disobedient. See on Rom. 11:30–32.

Deceived. Or, “led astray,” because of undisciplined minds easily captivated by every whim or fancy that appeals to the gratification of the senses. Because his will, and not God’s, constitutes life’s sole criterion, the pagan is the slave of debilitating habits, a victim of the narcotic of worldly pleasures. Often, under the guise of culture, beauty, and refinement, unconverted men and women serve the kingdom of evil, giving full rein to the forces of selfishness, pride, and moral decadence. Only a redirection of the mind, converted by the grace of God, is sufficient to expose the folly of sensual gratification and worldly pride. When the mind is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, the path of obedience to God’s way of life will be the chief desire, and the former deceptions of worldly “lusts and pleasures” will be revealed as folly. Paul here reminds the Cretan church members of the work the grace of God has accomplished in their lives.

Divers. Or, “different,” “various.”

Lusts. Gr. *epithumiai* (see on Rom. 7:7).

Pleasures. Without God, they would still be unenlightened, pleasure-loving people.

Malice and envy. See on 1 Cor. 5:8. Ill will and jealousy are common among those who live for worldly pleasure.

Hating. Hatred is the opposite of love (see on Matt. 5:43, 44).

4. But after that. Literally, “but when.” When man welcomes God into his life a new power begins to operate, contrary to the former forces of evil desires.

Kindness. Gr. *chrēstotēs* (see on Rom. 2:4).

Love ... toward man. Gr. *philanthrōpos*, “love for mankind,” used in classical Greek for one man’s kindness to another, the graciousness of a sovereign toward a subject, the sympathy of mankind for those in trouble, and of those who ransomed captives by paying the price for their freedom. Both *chrēstotēs* and *philanthrōpos* are facets of God’s “love” (*agapē*, see on 1 Cor. 13:1). Any moral superiority in the lives of Christians is solely the result of God’s love for His wayward children.

God our Saviour. Or, “our Saviour God” (see Titus 1:3; 2:10; see on 1 Tim. 1:1). In this epistle Paul ascribes the term “Saviour” both to God the Father (chs. 1:3; 2:10; 3:4) and to Jesus (chs. 1:4; 2:13; 3:6). When Jesus “appeared” (see on ch. 2:11) to men He manifested the united concern of the Godhead for man’s salvation (see on 2 Cor. 5:18, 19).

5. Works. Man stands justified before God on the basis of God’s mercy, not because of any good act he performs (see on Rom. 4:2, 6; 9:32; Gal. 2:16; 3:5, 10; Eph. 2:9). The general tenor of all unconverted lives consists in selfishness; thus, no man has lived up to the standards of “righteousness” (see on Rom. 3:23). Man’s only plea is the faithfulness of God’s love and mercy, not his own “works.”

Mercy. As another aspect of divine love (v. 4), mercy is here used instead of grace, probably to emphasize man’s wretched condition, which requires mercy. God’s pity for man’s miserable condition constitutes the assurance of man’s salvation.

Washing. Gr. *loutron* (see on Eph. 5:26), that is, a spiritual “washing,” which cleanses man of the evil tendencies described in Titus 3:3.

Regeneration. Or, “rebirth.” Because man is wretched and lost if left to himself, and because Jewish rites and ceremonial washings could not change man’s sinful nature, man’s only alternative is to accept God’s solution to the problem of sin, which demands a complete reformation of life (see on ch. 2:14). God purposes not only to forgive men but to restore them to a sinless life. This process of transforming sinful men and women into Christlike representatives of God’s way of life is known elsewhere in Scripture as sanctification (see on Rom. 6:19). Sanctification is an integral part of the Saviour’s program to eradicate sin. Here, the “washing of regeneration” is the initial step that begins the glorious program of sanctification.

Some believe that Paul here refers to baptism. However, baptism is not a means of regeneration, nor is it a basis for man’s salvation. Although baptism is required of all converts (see Matt. 28:19), it only symbolizes the inward washing, or “regeneration,” already accomplished by God (see on Matt. 3:6; Rom. 6:4); it does not purify sinners. Sincerely engaged in, it is a public witness to what God has already done in cleansing the sinner from his evil tendencies (see on Titus 3:3).

Renewing. Compare Rom. 12:2.

Of the Holy Ghost. Or, “by the Holy Spirit,” who daily strengthens and sanctifies the converted man. Because the Holy Spirit does not operate without man’s consent, spiritual progress depends upon the Christian’s daily commitment to God’s way of life. Thus, the process of sanctification calls for a partnership between God and man. After man chooses

God's way, the Holy Spirit energizes his weakened will, so that he is empowered to do God's will. "Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power" (DA 671).

6. Which. Or, "whom," that is, the Holy Spirit (v. 5).

He. That is, "God our Saviour" (v. 4).

Shed. Perhaps a reference to Pentecost (see Acts 2:18), but unquestionably to the personal experience of every genuinely converted Christian. Christ's promise of the coming Holy Spirit (see on John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26; 16:7–14) was abundantly fulfilled in the lives of these early Christians. In their own lives they exhibited the transforming, energizing power of the promised Spirit.

Christ our Saviour. See on ch. 2:13.

7. That. Or, "so that," as a result of the "washing of regeneration" (v. 5).

Being justified. Literally, "having been justified," on the basis of man's surrender to God's will for him. God regenerates only those whom He has justified; He forces no man's will (see on Rom. 3:24).

His. Gr. *ekeinos*, "that one's," that is, "God our Saviour" (v. 4).

Grace. See on Rom. 3:24.

Heirs. As long as the Christian maintains his position as a son of God he possesses the joy of sharing with Christ the reward of the redeemed (see on Rom. 8:17). Should he deny his sonship to God and refuse to represent the principles of the Father, he would no longer be heir to the eternal inheritance.

Eternal life. See on ch. 1:2.

8. Faithful. Or, "trustworthy" (cf. 1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11). Paul refers to the statements in Titus 3:4–7 concerning God's gracious salvation.

These things. The simple but ever-satisfying story of God's matchless love imparts new wonder and courage each time it is retold. Although sincere Christians are steadily maturing in character development, the constant reminder of God's justifying and sanctifying love provides daily peace and encouragement. Paul's outline of the plan of salvation (vs. 4–7) will never be fully appreciated by Christians in this life. Consequently, constant rehearsals of the truth concerning the nature of God will reveal treasures both old and new. These new insights provide added incentive to hasten the restoration of God's image.

They which have believed. The Greek implies the additional thought, "and still believe." Daily eating of the bread of life will maintain the fervent spirit of the genuine Christian. The Scriptures declare that those who are satisfied with only the elementary facts of the gospel soon cease to be useful to the Christian church. Their lives are stagnant because their minds are dormant. Because of their dullness "of hearing," as time passes by, such people are unprepared for the forward movement of God's Spirit (see on Heb. 5:11 to 6:1).

Maintain. Literally, "take the lead in."

Good works. See on Gal. 5:22, 23.

Profitable unto men. That is, the program of instruction Paul has outlined in this epistle. The "vain talkers and deceivers" (ch. 1:10) who had endeavored to lead astray the Cretan church designed their teachings to favor the natural impulses of the church members, with a view to monetary advantage (v. 11). Paul, however, was interested

solely in their character transformation (see on ch. 2:1–10). Paul’s gospel disturbed the Cretans, as it did others elsewhere, but it was this very disturbance that led men to examine themselves and to appropriate the cleansing mercy and restoring grace of God (see on chs. 2:14; 3:5).

9. Foolish questions. That is, senseless verbal disputes about Mosaic and Pharisaic regulations (see on 1 Tim. 1:4; 6:4; 2 Tim. 2:23).

Genealogies. See on 1 Tim. 1:4.

Strivings. Especially promoted by the perverted teachers of the law (see on 1 Tim. 1:7; Titus 1:10, 14) who sought to pervert Bible study into a discussion of strange and bizarre topics. Such theoretical speculations led to no character improvement, nor were they conducive to Christian fellowship.

Unprofitable. Because of his early training in the fanciful reasonings of Jewish lore, Paul resisted any tendency toward similar developments within the Christian church. The apostle had seen the effect on Judaism of the malignant growth of senseless and perverted teachings. He purposed that Christianity should not be so afflicted.

Vain. Gr. *mataios*, “useless,” “to no purpose” (see on 1 Cor. 15:17).

10. Heretick. Gr. *hairetikos*, “factious” (for a discussion of the related word *hairesis* see on Acts 5:17). Accordingly, the first phrase of this verse may read, “a factious person.” Paul here outlines the proper method of handling contentious members who promote the confusion and strife described in v. 9. The factious man maintains opinions that are contrary to the established gospel as preached by Paul and as set forth in the OT. If these contrary opinions are actively promoted, schism develops, and church members, both old and new, are unsettled in the faith.

A kind, thoughtful interview with the factious man is the duty of the presiding elder. If a favorable response is not forthcoming, then a second request for cooperation, more earnestly expressed, is clearly the leader’s next step. The purpose of these two interviews is to restore the factious member. Sufficient evidence must be presented to the dissenter so that his wrong views are fairly and conclusively exposed (see on chs. 1:9, 13; 2:15). Every leader should remember that the standard of sound doctrine is not his personal opinion, but the Word of God. Any decision on heretical views must be based on clear Biblical evidence.

Reject. Gr. *paraiteomai*, “to avoid,” “to shun” (see on 1 Tim. 4:7; 5:11). Paul does not here necessarily recommend disfellowshipping the factious man for his personal views unless he presses these in opposition to duly exercised church authority or there is an accompanying infraction of moral standards (cf. Rom. 16:17; see on 2 Thess. 3:14).

11. Subverted. Or, “perverted,” that is, turned away from the intent as well as the form of true teaching.

Sinneth. Not only has the factious man known the truth, and for a time at least rejected it in favor of his contradictory teachings, he has also rejected the brotherly remonstrances of the church leaders.

Condemned of himself. That is, his own conscience condemns him.

12. Artemas. Another faithful assistant of whom nothing further is known.

Tychicus. See on 2 Tim. 4:12. Either he or Artemas would replace Titus in Crete when he left for Nicopolis. This would enable Titus to arrange his work in preparation for his winter labors with Paul.

Nicopolis. Literally, “city of victory.” Probably the city in the province of Epirus founded by Augustus after the successful battle at Actium.

Determined. Or, “decided.”

To winter. See Vol. VI, p. 107.

13. Bring. Gr. *propempō*, “to send forward,” that is, after providing for the essentials of a journey.

Zenas the lawyer. No other information is available in the Bible regarding this co-worker of Paul. It is not clear whether he was an expert in the Mosaic law or in Roman law. According to tradition he later became bishop of Diospolis.

Apollos. See on 1 Cor. 1:12.

Diligently. Or, “earnestly,” to be connected with “bring.” Zenas and Apollos were to be thoroughly outfitted for their anticipated journey.

14. Our’s. That is, Cretan Christians.

Maintain. See on v. 8.

Uses. Or, “wants.” The visit of Zenas and Apollos would be an excellent opportunity for the Cretan church to manifest Christian hospitality, even though the visitors might be complete strangers.

15. With me. Paul doubtless refers to his traveling companions.

Them that love us. That is, fellow Christians.

You all. Paul apparently intended Titus to read this letter before the whole church.

Amen. See on Matt. 5:18. Important textual evidence may be cited (cf. p. 10) for the omission of this word.

The postscript following v. 15 appears in no early manuscript. It was evidently not part of the original inspired record.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

1, 2 SL 87

2 ML 191; 2T 389

3–5MB 75

5 COL 397; DA 317; MH 65

8 SL 87

2

²Nichol, F. D. (1978). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible with exegetical and expository comment*. Commentary Reference Series (Tit 1:1). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.